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[Dear Permission to be Powerful Reader](#)

Dear *Permission to be Powerful* Reader,

**You can have all your paperwork in order—and still feel like you're one tweet away from exile.**

That's what no one tells you about being an immigrant in America:

**Even when you're safe on paper, you're never safe in your body.**

**Even when you're legal, you never feel legit.**

You flinch at headlines.

You hold your breath at airports.

You memorize your rights like prayers.

You live with the quiet dread that a law might shift.

A tweet might spark chaos.

You could simply be in the wrong place at the wrong time.

You fit the perpetrator profile.

That ICE might knock—*wrong address, sorry*.

They're hunting people like dogs in the streets.

They're circling around like sharks.

They smell blood...

They're on the nightly news...

There was a standoff the next town over.

I see them at the grocery store...

I tell myself I'm overreacting. But I'm not. I'm adapting to uncertainty.

And lately, that dread is rising again.

The other day, I emailed my immigration attorney, Jacelyn. Not for legal help—just reassurance. I wanted to know:

**Am I still okay? Is there anything I missed?  
Here's what she said:**

*“Fortunately, in your case you are already a permanent resident and at this stage we are removing the conditions on your status... I believe you are safe from any troubling policies the administration might put out.”*

That should be enough, right?

And yet, it wasn't.

**I emailed her again a week later:**

*“The news cycle is brutal. I don't know how not to panic. Are there any updates I should be aware of?”*

She was kind. Reassuring. Empathetic. She told me not to worry unless I'm traveling—just carry my paperwork and I should be fine.

But here's the truth:  
This isn't just about paperwork.  
It's about power.

**Because when you're an immigrant under a government that treats the law like a mood swing, you don't feel like a resident. You feel like a tenant.**

Temporary. Conditional. Exposed.

And what's wild is—*technically*, I'm one of the lucky ones.

I'm not undocumented. I'm not on DACA. I'm not appealing a removal order.

I have my green card. I pay taxes. I've committed no crimes. I help people for a living.

But I still worry that if the wrong person gets bored and angry, I could lose everything.

**There's a toll that comes with this “conditional belonging.”**

It breaks my nervous system.

It makes me feel like you have to be perfect, quiet, invisible.

It teaches me to flinch when politicians speak in generalizations.

I'm writing this because I know I'm not the only one.

If you're waiting on your I-751.

If you're afraid to leave the country even though you're "legal."

If you feel that sick tension between the law and your lived experience...

Just know that you're not paranoid. You're *attuned*.

And you are not alone.

Protect yourself.

**In solidarity,**

***Anton***

*Permission to Be Powerful*



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